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## ONCE AGAIN, THE CHALLENGE TO THE U.S. ARMY DURING A DEFENSE REDUCTION: TO REMAIN A MILITARY PROFESSION

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# **Professional Military Ethics Monograph**

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**Don M. Snider**

**February 2012**

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## FOREWORD

This monograph places the Army's 2011 campaign of learning about the Army as profession after a decade of war into the context of the just-initiated Department of Defense (DoD) reductions. The exact shape of those reductions and the defense strategy our down-sized land forces are to execute in the future are only now becoming clear as this monograph goes to press in early 2012. But what is already clear is that the U.S. Army will undergo a severely resource-constrained transition to a significantly smaller force than it sustained during the past decade of war. As with the post-Cold War downsizing during the Bill Clinton administration in the late 1990s, one critical challenge for the Army centers on the qualitative and institutional character of the Army after the reductions. Will the Army manifest the essential characteristics and behavior of a military profession comprised of Soldiers and civilians who see themselves sacrificially called to vocation? Will the Army perceive its service to country within a motivating professional culture that sustains a meritocratic ethic, or will the Army's character be more like any other government occupation in which its members view themselves as filling a job, motivated mostly by the extrinsic factors of pay, location, and work hours?

To get ahead of this coming challenge, in mid-2010 the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff directed the Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), then General Martin Dempsey, to undertake a broad campaign of learning, involving the entire Department. The intent was to think through what it means for the Army to be a profession of arms and for its Soldiers and civilians to be professionals as the Army largely returns stateside

after a decade of war and then has to quickly transition to the new era of Defense reductions. That campaign has been ongoing for a year now and several new conceptions of the Army as a military profession have been produced, along with numerous initiatives currently being staffed to strengthen the professional character of the Army as it simultaneously recovers from a decade of war and transitions through reductions in force. They form the descriptive content of this monograph.

One of those conceptions is the renewal of a unique aspect of the identity and role of the strategic leaders of the Army—the sergeants major, colonels, general officers, and members of the Senior Executive Service—as the “stewards of the Army profession.” This is true because they are the only cohort of leaders who control the Army’s major management and enterprise level systems, which have the capability to shape and strengthen the Army as a military profession. It is to them, and to those who support them in the difficult judgments that they must make in the next few years, that this monograph is particularly focused.



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## SUMMARY

The U.S. Army has been through three reductions-in-force since the inception of the All-Volunteer Force. The first one, roughly 1972-78, actually birthed the All-Volunteer Force. The second one occurred in the late 1990s after the end of the Cold War when the U.S. Army was reduced by approximately one-third in both force structure and budget (Total Obligational Authority). The third one is just now beginning in 2011-12 as the Army returns from a decade of war in the Middle East.

Critical to the future effectiveness of the Army, and thus its trust with the American people, is whether the Army will retain the essential characteristics of a military profession—each of the six carefully explicated in this monograph—as it transits this era of Department of Defense reductions. Unfortunately, that future effectiveness is often not really known until the “first battle of the next war,” as the Army learned so painfully in the past, e.g., Task Force Smith in Korea.

As noted in the Foreword, the Army’s campaign of learning about the Army profession has been ongoing for a year, a campaign led by a broad community of practice (CoP) drawn from many of the proponent Centers (Army schools or agencies for each Army branch or functional specialty) in dialogue with cohorts throughout the Army. For purposes of analytical capabilities, the CoP is organized by cohort within the profession, e.g., officers, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers, enlisted Soldiers, Army civilians, etc. Throughout calendar year 2011, that CoP conducted multiple surveys, assessments, dialogues, forums, and exercises across the Army. This monograph highlights some of the outcomes to date, particularly those

relating to the central research question — what does it mean now, after a decade of war, for the Army to be a military profession. This question is addressed by presenting four initial outcomes of the campaign:

1. The Background Realities of the Army as a Profession;
2. Including Army Civilians: A New Typology for the Army Profession;
3. The Process of Professionalization and the Criteria for Individual Certifications; and,
4. The Essential Characteristics of the Army as a Profession.

As this descriptive monograph shows, the Army is making good strides in its most recent effort to prepare for transition in a period of Defense reductions. The Army is doing so by keeping professional capabilities intact and ready for the first battle of the next conflict. But it must be understood that the really hard work is yet to be done.

The hard work is to conform the daily behavior of the institution to that of a profession when almost every tendency during the period of reductions will be to behave like a government occupation: centralizing authority; bureaucratizing processes; micro-managing within hierarchy, while the force “does more with less”; and, taking autonomy away from the very folks in whom the future of the institution lies — its junior professionals, both uniformed and civilian. To avoid such an outcome is now a central challenge facing the “stewards” of the Army profession.

**ONCE AGAIN, THE CHALLENGE TO  
THE U.S. ARMY  
DURING A DEFENSE REDUCTION:  
TO REMAIN A MILITARY PROFESSION**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Army's Campaign of Learning—What does it  
Mean to be a Military Profession after a Decade of  
War.**

All professions are by their nature reflective institutions. It is the only way they can continually adapt with new expert knowledge and practices to meet the evolving needs of their clients. Failing that, they cease to be professions. Military professions fall in this category, but as large bureaucratic institutions, they can find it difficult to be truly reflective.

Fortunately, however, they are mindful of their history in ways that other professions often are not. The study of military history has long been considered both an asset (insightful for lessons learned in war) and a hindrance (the proclivity to therefore fight the last war) for the U.S. Army. As historical reflection has shown, it has always been a challenge for the Army to come out of periods of significant force and resource reductions with its professional capabilities intact and ready for the “first battle” of the next war.<sup>1</sup> This is not a new challenge, rather a recurring one!

The primary conclusion of the first study in 3 decades on the Army as a profession, a study undertaken just after the last major Defense reductions—the post-Cold War reductions of the 1990s—stated the challenge this way:

At present, the Army's bureaucratic nature outweighs and compromises its professional nature. This is true in practice, but, of greater importance, it is regarded as true in the minds of the officer corps. Officers do not share a common understanding of the Army profession, and many of them accept the pervasiveness of bureaucratic norms and behavior as natural and appropriate. This is the core conclusion of this project, underlying everything that follows. . . . Throughout its history the Army has had to balance its two natures, the Army is at once a government bureaucracy and a military profession. Although this dual nature results in tension and stress for the Army, both aspects are necessary. However, for the U.S. Army to provide the military capabilities expected of and needed by a 21st Century military force, its professional nature must dominate. Our conclusion is that it does not; and in fact the current ascendancy of the institution's bureaucratic nature is undermining professional identity and performance.<sup>2</sup>

Now fast forward to 2012, with two wars winding down coincident with the start of yet another period of severe Defense reductions, such institutional mindfulness toward historical reflection is again serving the Army well as it addresses its central challenge. Simply stated, as in the title of this monograph, that challenge is once again to remain a profession as it transits this next era of force reductions. By retaining its professional character, it is understood that the Army will have the best chance of having, when the next war starts, both the necessary expert knowledge and the individual professionals to apply it effectively and ethically.<sup>3</sup> But as the Army has recently stated:

In the face of so many challenges, we have demonstrated great strengths such as the determination and adaptability of our junior leaders and their dedication

to service shown through numerous deployments. Yet we have also struggled in some areas to maintain the highest standards of the Profession of Arms. As we have at other times in our history, we assess that it is time to refresh and renew our understanding of our profession.<sup>4</sup>

So, to once again address this recurring challenge, the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff directed in October 2010 that the Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), then General Martin Dempsey, lead a campaign of learning to review the Army as a profession. They issued “terms of reference” in which they stated that, as a profession, it is now “essential that we take a hard look at ourselves to ensure we understand what we have been through over the past nine years, how we have changed, and how we must adapt to succeed in an era of persistent conflict.”<sup>5</sup> To do so, pursuing the following three questions became the focal point for the campaign of learning:

1. What does it mean for the Army to be a Profession of Arms?
2. What does it mean to be a professional Soldier?
3. After 9 years of war, how are we as individual professionals and as a profession meeting these aspirations?<sup>6</sup>

To lead and govern the campaign, General Dempsey appointed the Commanding General, Combined Arms Center (CAC), as executive agent who in turn organized a broad community of practice (CoP) drawn from many of the Army proponent centers (Army schools or agencies for each Army branch or functional specialty). For purposes of analytical capabilities, the CoP was organized by cohort within the

profession, e.g., officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), warrant officers, enlisted Soldiers, Army civilians, etc. Throughout calendar year 2011, that CoP conducted multiple assessments and dialogues across the Army. This monograph highlights some of the outcomes to date, particularly those relating to the first research question – What does it mean now, after a decade of war, for the Army to be a profession? This question will be addressed by presenting four initial outcomes of the campaign:

1. The Background Realities of the Army as a Profession.
2. Including Army Civilians: A New Typology for the Army Profession.
3. The Process of Professionalization and the Criteria for Individual Certifications.
4. The Essential Characteristics of the Army as a Profession.

Undoubtedly, the Army is considered a profession today. But, as will be discussed below, the Army is not a profession just because it says so. The Army is now well respected, along with the other services, and quite highly rated in every recent poll of public trust, even amidst several highly publicized ethical and professional lapses.<sup>7</sup> Such approval, however, cannot be taken for granted, particularly in times of urgent budget reductions. The Army's client, the American people, get to make the judgment of the extent to which the Army is a profession, and they will do so based on the bond of trust created with them by the effective and ethical manner in which the Army continues to build and employ its capabilities.

## THE BACKGROUND REALITIES

The first task of the campaign of learning was to reach consensus within the CoP on a common understanding of the social reality in which the Army operates, a reality now not well described in Army doctrine. It includes the four vital relationships and responsibilities that exist between the Army and its client (the American people) as well as those within the profession: between the institution and its individual members and among Army leaders at all levels, be they uniformed or civilian. Summarized, these roles and responsibilities are:<sup>8</sup>

1. The Army cannot simply declare itself to be a profession and its Soldiers or civilians to be professionals. In fact, it is a military profession, as opposed to a military occupation, only if and when its leaders conform its culture and practices to that of an effective and ethical institution and maintain earned trust from the American people. Simply stated, the trust of the American people is the lifeblood of the Army as a profession. That trust has to be earned continually by the effective and ethical application of the profession's expertise with land combat power on behalf of the society it serves.

To recall, professions produce uniquely expert work, not routine or repetitive work. Medicine, theology, law, and the military are "social trustee" forms of professions.<sup>9</sup> Effectiveness, rather than pure efficiency, is the key to the work of professionals—the sick want a cure, the sinner wants absolution, the accused want exoneration, and the defenseless seek security. Thus, professionals require years of study and practice before they are capable of expert work. Society utterly depends on such professionals for their health, justice,

and security. Consequently, a deep moral obligation rests on the profession, and its professionals, to continuously develop expertise and use that expertise only in the best interests of society – professionals are actually servants. The military profession, in particular, must provide the security which the American society cannot provide for itself but without which it cannot survive; and the Army must use its expertise according to the values held by that client, the American people.<sup>10</sup>

2. “Profession” is not the default or natural character of the Army, thus the title of this monograph. “The Army has not always been a profession in the accepted definitions of the term. The Army’s corporate identity – its culture, expertise, ethos, and place in society – has evolved over four centuries of American history.”<sup>11</sup> It is, by its creation under the Constitution, a government occupation that took until the end of the 19th century to earn the status of profession and even now will only behave as a profession if its leaders at all levels, both uniformed and civilian, conform its culture and practices daily to those of a profession, i.e., if they lead it by mission command to be, and therefore to behave as, a uniquely military profession.

As noted in the introduction, the Army’s degree of professionalism has waxed and waned over the years, sometimes displaying more the characteristics of an occupation than a profession – more professional in periods of expansion and later phases of war and more “occupational” in periods of contraction after wars, e.g., post-World War II into Korea and post-Vietnam. This trend continued even after the establishment of an All-Volunteer Force in 1971 and the rebuilding of the Army’s Corps of NCOs post-Vietnam.<sup>12</sup> It was highly professional in Operations DESERT SHIELD/

DESERT STORM in 1990, but then less so through the adaption of highly centralized managerial practices over the next decade of force reductions, causing an exodus of captains and other talent.<sup>13</sup> A recent report suggests that today's operating forces after a decade of war exhibit fairly well the traits of a profession, but that the force-generating, or institutional, side of the Army does not—or at least does so to a far lesser extent.<sup>14</sup>

Learning from our history of post-conflict transitions, the critical point here is that leadership within the Army, specifically the competence and character of its individual leaders at all levels, uniformed and civilian, **is the single most influential factor in the Army being, and remaining, a military profession.** The Army's leaders are the *sine qua non* of the Army's current and future status as a profession.

3. Professions uniquely use their Ethic as the primary means of internal motivation and self-control and external trust-building. The servant ethic of professions is characterized as *cedat emptor*, "let the taker believe in us."<sup>15</sup> The Army's professional Ethic enables trust externally with the American people and civilian leaders and internally with junior professionals within the ranks.<sup>16</sup> Such trust can be understood as a willingness to be vulnerable, both institutionally and individually, which is formed at least in part around the expectation that an exchange partner will not behave opportunistically. Those trust relationships must be re-earned every day by Army leaders at every level living the Ethic, an embodiment of Army values that compels followers to live and serve in the same manner. Incidentally, a full narrative of the Army's Ethic cannot be found now in any single document—a doctrinal omission that this campaign will help change.

Because of this trust relationship, the American people grant significant autonomy to the Army to create its own expert knowledge and to police the application of that knowledge by its individual professionals. Nonprofessional occupations do not enjoy similar autonomy. Thus a self-policing Ethic is an absolute necessity for the Army's status as a profession, especially given the lethality, the moral content, inherent in what it does.

4. Other types of producing organizations motivate their workers through extrinsic factors such as salary, benefits, and promotions. In contrast, professions focus more on inspirational, intrinsic factors like the lifelong pursuit of expert knowledge, the privilege and honor of service, camaraderie, and the status of membership in an ancient, honorable, and revered occupation. This is what motivates true professionals; it is why the work of a professional is considered a personal calling to vocation—something far more meaningful and fulfilling than merely a job.

## **INCLUDING ARMY CIVILIANS**

### **A New Typology for the Army Profession.**

The second outcome of the campaign has been to refine the Army's understanding of itself as a profession, a refinement that now facilitates the logical inclusion of Army civilians as members of the profession. When the original White Paper was published in December 2010 to kick off internal dialogue within the Army, it was cast in the language of the Army as a "Profession of Arms." The reason for this is found in the following quotation/discussion extracted from the White Paper:<sup>17</sup>

The preeminent military task, and what separates [the military profession] from all other occupations, is that soldiers are routinely prepared to kill . . . in addition to killing and preparing to kill, the soldier has two other principal duties . . . some soldiers die and, when they are not dying, they must be preparing to die.

James H. Toner<sup>18</sup>

Among all professions, our calling, the Profession of Arms, is unique because of the lethality of our weapons and our operations. Soldiers are tasked to do many things besides combat operations, but ultimately, as noted in the quotation above, the core purpose and reason why the Army exists is to apply lethal force.<sup>19</sup> Soldiers must be prepared to kill and die when needed in service to the Republic. The moral implications of being a professional Soldier could not be greater and compel us to be diligent in our examination of what it means to be a profession, and a professional Soldier.

Very shortly into the campaign, however, it became apparent that the necessity to include Army civilians in the conceptualization of the Army as a military profession precluded the “. . . of Arms” description for all of the Army. After all, Army civilians in arsenals and depots throughout Army Material Command, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers, many certified as professional engineers across the various United States in which they serve, do not carry arms nor use them in the traditional sense. Yet the truly symbiotic relationship between the Army Civilian Corps and the uniformed Army, particularly when employed in generating land combat power and providing homeland security within the United States, needed to be accurately portrayed in the conceptualizations and doctrines being formed.

The solution within the CoP was to revise, to broaden, the description of the Army's expert knowledge/expertise to:

... the design, generation, support, and application of land combat power. This land power is normally applied in Joint Operations through the full spectrum of conflict and the subsequent establishment of a better peace. Such knowledge is unique and is not generally held outside the Army profession. The Army's expertise, then, is the ethical and effective application of that expert knowledge by certified individuals and units in the support and defense of the American people.<sup>20</sup>

By expanding the realm of the Army's expert knowledge/expertise to "the design, generation, support, and application" of land combat power, the non-uniformed member of the Army could now, rightly, see where their expert service fits within the profession. Such a conceptualization reflects the reality that the Army Profession is, in fact, composed of two very different, but recognizable and well-known, components both with mutually complementary duties and capabilities. It also reflects the reality that both must therefore be highly professional for the Army to operate effectively and ethically.

The Army Civilian Corps has made significant progress over the past few years to become a professional entity (establishment of the Army Civilian University, creation of an Army Civilian Creed, creation of a program for civilian workforce transformation to better categorize expert [professional] from nonexpert [nonprofessional] skills, etc.) and must continue on that path if the Army as a whole is to maintain itself as a profession.<sup>21</sup> Thus, with this broadened conceptualization, the CoP created a revised typology which slightly altered that published earlier in the White Paper.

At the top of the typology now is the *American Profession of Arms* which includes all of America's armed forces. It is our national subset of the larger international Profession of Arms.<sup>22</sup> This was the focus of American scholars in the early post-World War II era of the 1950s and 1960s, notably Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz.<sup>23</sup> Within this American Profession of Arms are three distinct military professions, currently the land warfare profession, the aero-space profession, and the maritime profession, divided by their unique military-technical expertise that traditionally has been focused on the different physical domains of warfare—land, air, and sea.

At the second level in the typology is *The Army Profession*, the object of the current Campaign. It is the major part of the land warfare profession mentioned above (the other component, on occasion, is the U.S. Marine Corps). It is an institution contiguous with the Department of the Army, including all direct and retired employees of that Executive Department, uniformed or civilian. Not included within this category, nor within this typology, are those within the Department of the Army employed under contract to a profit or not-for-profit entity.

Logically, then, at the third and final level of analysis are the *two* components of The Army Profession—the *Army Profession of Arms* and the *Army Civilian Corps*. The former is composed of the uniformed Army, those skilled in arts of warfare and under unlimited liability in its “killing and dying” aspects. The latter is composed of all nonuniformed, civilian members of the Department of the Army who serve to support the design, generation, support, and application of such land combat power by the Army.

The applicable portion of this typology is displayed visually in Figure 1 (the internal boundaries and categories of “aspiring, practicing, and retired” Army professionals are explained in the next section). Understandably, given the immense complexity within the composition of the Department of the Army, there are likely a few exceptions to this typology, those who do not fit exactly as described above. Nonetheless, it is clear within the Campaign that this typology of two separate, but mutually complementary, components within the Army Profession best fits the reality that exists on the ground. It also offers the best way ahead for policy decisions on such critical issues as training, education, leader development, and certification of Army professionals, regardless of component.

**The Army Profession Membership: Two Mutually Complementary Components**

- ☐ Army Profession of Arms = uniformed members
- ☐ Army Civilian Corps = DA Civilians
- ☐ Army Profession membership granted upon taking oath
- ☐ Professional status earned once certified by the institution
- ☐ Members remain an aspiring Army Professional until certified by the institution



**Figure 1. Revised Typology for the Army Profession.**

## The Process of Professionalization and the Criteria for Certifications.

Recalling the earlier discussion on the “Background Realities,” it is not surprising that during the course of the Campaign, the CoP settled on one understanding and depiction of the developmental sequence that produces Army professionals when both institution and individual fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities; see Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Professionalization within the Army.**

Note also in Figure 2 that certifications are multiple, where professionals are to be sequentially recertified as they grow in responsibility or into areas requiring new or additional knowledge and skills. The first certification in the sequence, however, is the most critical in that it establishes the individual for the first time as a “practicing” professional of one of the two components of the Army Profession. Subsequently, the individual either exits the Army before a full career or retires after a full career, moving to the category of “retired” Army professional. In this category, many

are still influential, particularly within the Army's client, the American people, and must be considered by both themselves and the profession's client as a part of the profession, living under its moral obligations, etc.<sup>24</sup>

In all modern professions, the role of certifications is at least twofold: for the institution, certifications establish for the client the level of qualification and thus legitimacy of the individual professional to practice effectively and ethically, e.g., for a unit commander to lead America's sons and daughters in mortal combat. For the individual professional, the Army's certification is motivational—an earned “rite of passage” to the next level in one's identity and chosen path of development, and normally a major point of personal pride and satisfaction.

Historically, there have been two primary means by which individual certifications were implemented by both components of the Army Profession: (1) official promotion systems that used regular performance evaluations; and, (2) periodic activities of professional education within the sequential and progressive Army schools system that often included branch, skill, or functional area qualifications (e.g., U.S. Army War College attendance for certification as a strategic leader; pilot and flight crew certifications within Army Aviation, etc.). However, the Army has largely relinquished its control over both of these processes of certification, especially during the past decade of war. For a number of reasons both means have lost legitimacy (e.g., many officers have delayed or altogether skipped professional education because of repeated deployments; statutory requirements have required the promotion of certain numbers of Army leaders even though they, in the eyes of their peers, did not meet professional standards). For example, an Army

that for a significant period promotes to the rank of major 98 percent of those “fully qualified,” and to lieutenant colonel 95 percent, is simply not self-policing the development of its professionals. To infer the perception of Army majors at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, as to the certifications they have been through, one only need to note that in one survey, 24 percent of them “do not believe the Army is a profession.”<sup>25</sup>

Restoring a system of professional certifications is a vital part of the Army’s re-conception and maintenance of itself as a military profession. Without such essential certifications, the Army simply cannot hope to maintain its legitimate status as an effective and trusted military profession through the coming Defense reductions.

For effective and consistent certifications, the Army Profession must have a set of broad, common criteria for certifications within the profession, both objective and subjective, even though at the component level (i.e., within the Army Profession of Arms and within the Army Civilian Corps) application of these criteria may diverge. As discussed earlier under the mutual responsibilities for the development of Army professionals, membership as an “aspiring professional” is conferred upon taking the oath of service, so what we are addressing here is the professional’s first certification to become a “practicing professional,” and the criteria to be used within both components of the Army Profession, uniformed and civilian.

Thus, another outcome of the campaign to date is the following articulation and rationale for three broad criteria for future certifications of all Army professionals, understanding that they will be applied in more specific detail by Army branches and force modernization proponents within the two components of the Army Profession:<sup>26</sup>

(1) COMPETENCE in Expert Work: The professional's work is expert work related to the defense of the Nation, contributing to the design, generation, support, or application of land combat power; and, the individual's personal competence must be certified by the Army commensurate with the level of certification granted. Rationale:

- "Professions certify; bureaucracies promote," is the reality in the operational world, both within and beyond the military. Thus, to maintain professional status as a self-policing institution through the coming transition, the Army must certify each professional before beginning his or her practice and when advancing to each level of more difficult, responsible work.
- Certifications also provide immense motivation as "rites of passage" for individual Army professionals. In this sense, the Army owes its professionals solid certifications at each level of expertise and responsibility.
- To qualify as expert work, the work of the Army Professional must be based on expert knowledge, theoretical and practical; such work requires expert judgment and is not inherently routine or repetitive. In addition, it requires time, study, and practice to create expertise, the use of which often entails risk to the professional — physical risk for the warrior, and the risk of professional error for all Army professionals.

(2) Moral CHARACTER requisite to being an Army professional. Rationale:

- The Army's expert work creates a moral responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves. It demands a moral character of sacrifice, service, and respect for human life.

- As discussed in the White Paper, the practice of each Army professional is the “repetitive exercise of discretionary moral judgments” (at their own level of responsibility), followed by actions to implement, execute missions, and maintain stewardship of the Army’s future capabilities. Each of these decisions, whether made in the Pentagon or on the battlefield, is of high moral content.
- Thus the personal character of an Army professional is a vital aspect of the necessary observations and evaluations for certification: Does the individual professional or leader willingly live and advance the Army’s Ethic in all of its applications such that the Army Profession is, in fact, a self-policing institution?

(3) Resolute COMMITMENT to the Army’s Duty, which is far more than a job: By observation and evaluation it is to be clear that the professional has been called to a resolute, abiding commitment to effective and honorable service in the Army and to the Nation. Rationale:

- To be an Army Professional means to be called to more than a job and to be primarily motivated by the intrinsic factors of sacrifice and service to others and the Nation rather than motivated by the extrinsic factors of a job such as pay, vacations, work hours, and location.
- At higher levels of leadership certification, such a calling entails the leader’s demonstrated and increased capability to steward the future of the profession.

There remains the challenge to specify how these criteria are to be applied within each component—within the Army Profession of Arms and the Army Civilian Corps. That application may be different in each case, and requires additional analysis, some of which is already ongoing. For now, however, based on the campaign assessments to date, the focus of the CoP is to determine recommendations to restore both the Army promotion system and its professional education systems to be effective certifications, along with force modernization and branch proponents (*Army Regulation* [AR] 5-22) or their civilian equivalents (AR 690-950) doing the same for functional expertise.

## **THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARMY PROFESSION**

The fourth major outcome of the Campaign is the identification of those institutional or organizational characteristics that the Army considers essential for it be a trustworthy profession into the future. These attributes, more than nice to have, are those very few that are truly essential and without which the Army will atrophy into just an obedient military bureaucracy. The belief is that, in the coming transition, if the Army focuses on and prioritizes its efforts at both the institutional and individual level by these few characteristics, it can be reasonably confident that other desirable attributes will also be appropriately managed.

The White Paper offered the following attributes as those that may well be essential for each level:

THE PROFESSION	THE PROFESSIONAL
Expertise	Skill
Trust	Trust
Development	Leadership
Values	Character
Service	Duty

The rationale for this short list was straightforward. Basically, the argument runs like this:

- The Profession of Arms requires expert knowledge (e.g., doctrine), organizations, systems, and materiel, i.e., *expertise*; that expertise is manifested as unique *skills* in the individual professional and ultimately, by Army units.
- The profession exists only by the *trust* of the client; and that trust is the same trust that enables the individual Soldier to develop within the Army as a profession, for Soldiers and units to bond, for Soldiers' families to trust the Army through myriad deployments, and for Army leaders to engage effectively in civil-military relations. And that is why *trust* is the most important principle and attribute sought for the Army. It is equally applicable in its simplest form to both profession and professional – it is, as stated earlier, the lifeblood of the profession.
- To maintain that trust, the profession requires the continuous *development* of human prac-

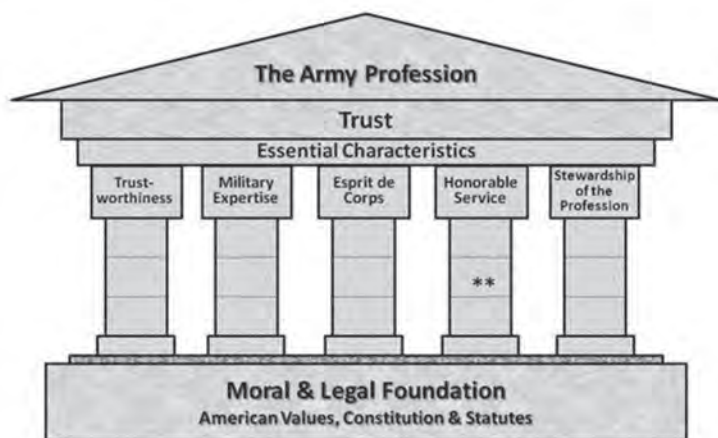
tioners, i.e., experts who hold high levels of resilience, adaptability, wisdom, and other attributes that make them effective members of the profession; that development manifests in *leadership* by professionals at all ranks.

- The profession requires unwavering, deeply-held beliefs and *values* on which to base its Ethic; those values, when well internalized, are manifested in the *character* of individual professionals. Such strength of character would include internalization of the Army's Seven Values and the larger content of the Ethic.
- Finally, the profession provides a vital *service* to American society and does so in subordination to civil authority; that service is manifested, inspirationally, in the *duty* of the individual professional.<sup>27</sup>

When these characteristics of the profession and attributes of the individual professional were reviewed by the Army at large (by survey that asked respondents to rate the importance of each, etc.), the results across all cohorts were consistent. Traditional, familiar attributes of the Army such as Service, Duty, Leadership, Expertise, Values, Character, and Trust were highly rated. Unfortunately several attributes unique to a profession, such as critical thinking, lifelong learning, and stewardship were rated low, indicating the importance and urgency of this campaign of learning!

The final outcome, shown in Figure 3, generally adopted the attributes from the White Paper, though in some cases different language was adapted with more martial terminology that was found by the CoP in focus groups and assessments to better communi-

cate within Army culture. As approved by TRADOC, the essential nature of each attribute is now defined as portrayed in Figure 3.<sup>28</sup>



*\*\*Each pillar is strengthened by supporting content, e.g., Honorable Service includes the 7 Army Values.*

**Figure 3. Essential Characteristics of the Army Profession.**

**Trust:** A positive relationship with the American people based on mutual trust and respect is the lifeblood of the Army profession. The Army builds and sustains such trust through the active and continuous presence of the essential characteristics of the profession. Only by military effectiveness performed through honorable service by an Army with high levels of trustworthiness and *esprit de corps*, and with members who steward the profession's future and self-regulate the profession to maintain its integrity — can the Army be a military profession that the American people trust to support and defend the Constitution and their rights and national interests.

**Trustworthiness:** Internal to the Army, trust serves as a vital organizing principle that establishes conditions necessary for an effective and ethical profession. Trustworthiness is the positive belief and faith in the competence, moral character, and calling of comrades and fellow professionals that permits the exercise of discretionary judgment – the core function of the Army professional’s work. Such trustworthiness must be shared among comrades both civilian and military, between leaders and followers in the chains of command, between the Army and each of its individual professionals, between units and organizations, and between the Army and its Joint, Inter-agency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) and coalition partners.

**Military Expertise:** The Army creates its own expert knowledge, both theoretical and practical, for the defense of the Nation and the design, generation, support, and application of land combat power. This land power is normally applied in Joint Operations through the full spectrum of conflict and the subsequent establishment of a better peace. Such knowledge is unique and is not generally held outside the Army profession. The Army’s expertise, then, is the ethical and effective design, generation, support, and application of land combat power by certified individuals and units in the support and defense of the American people.

**Esprit de Corps:** To prevail in arduous and chaotic warfare, the Army Profession must have spirited, self-aware professionals who compose cohesive and effective units embedded in a culture that sustains traditions, respects customs, and creates a sense of belonging by inspiring martial excellence and the fortitude to never quit. Winning in combat is the only acceptable outcome; the Army cannot fail the American people. Thus the obligation to create and maintain a

dominant, winning spirit within the Army Ethic rests with leaders at all levels.

**Honorable Service:** Without an effective and ethical Army Profession, the Nation is vulnerable to aggression. Thus the Army Profession exists not for itself, but for the noble and honorable purpose of preserving peace, supporting and defending the Constitution, and protecting the American people and way of life. The Army is called to perform that duty virtuously, with integrity and respect for human dignity as the American people expect, in accordance with the Army's Values. Army Professionals are therefore fully committed to more than a job — they are called to the deep moral obligations of the Army's Duty. Under that deep commitment they willingly maintain the Army as subordinate to civilian authorities and they subordinate their own interests to those of the mission, being ready, if need be, to sacrifice in the defense of the Republic.

**Stewardship of the Profession:** All true professions must self-regulate—they create their own expertise and Ethic which they continually regenerate, reinforce, and enforce. The Army has existed for well over 2 centuries, but it has been a military profession for only half of that period. It will maintain its status as a profession with the American people if its leaders at all levels, both military and civilian, serve daily as stewards investing in the Army's future—in its evolving expert knowledge, the development of Army professionals and units to use that expertise, and in self-policing the institution to maintain the Army Ethic. Because of this unique responsibility, Army leaders are the *sine qua non* of the Army as a military profession.

## THE WAY AHEAD

### **From Learning to Policymaking and Implementation.**

As with any campaign of learning within large hierarchical organizations, public or private, the real challenge comes after the conceptualizations are done and they must be given life by the management processes and structures of the institution. Such is now the case in 2012 with this campaign. To recall, the intent of the campaign is ultimately to inform and mold Army culture into that of a profession, rather than a government occupation, by renewing critical understandings within the Army that have, to the extent that they existed previously, atrophied during a decade of war.

Over the course of 2011, the Army has assessed itself against these standards through the “lenses” of these renewed concepts of the Army as a profession in over 60 individual activities. These included: concepts development (e.g., White Paper and pamphlets); assessments (e.g., numerous studies by the cohorts represented within the CoP, two Army-wide surveys, multiple focus groups from among both the operating and generating forces, and multiple red team analyses); professional military ethics (PME) curriculum redesigns and the development of new training products (e.g., simulators and apps); professional publications (e.g., two special issues of *Military Review*, U.S. Army War College monographs, etc.); and extensive efforts at dialog within the Army (e.g., conference presentations, blogs, and forums).

To date, assessments of the Campaign have led to seven Army Profession Strengthening Initiatives (APSI), each drawn from findings within the Campaign assessments and including numerous initiatives

to close the gaps between the Army's current state as a profession and its desired end state. For example, sample findings for three of the ASPIs include:<sup>29</sup>

1. *Building and Sustaining Trust Relationships*—A variety of data indicates that Army leaders are competent professionals who trust each other at their own level and believe that their unit will accomplish its mission; however, there appears to be less trust in the leadership at the institutional Army level.

2. *Improving Standards and Discipline*—Discipline and adherence to standards has declined and, if this continues, it can erode the core Army profession characteristics of trustworthiness and stewardship. As operational tempo slows, the Army has an opportunity to evaluate whether some standards have become obsolete, to reeducate the force on Army standards, to reinforce professional discipline, and to recommit to professional excellence that is the hallmark of the Army Profession.

3. *Certifying Army Professionals*—Professional certification criteria and standards of application are not perceived as meaningful, allowing some individuals to advance prematurely. . . . Currently, the Army lacks a common conceptual architecture for the progression of professionalism across the Total Force. No consistent set of criteria exists for certification at any level, whether for generalists or specialists. The exigencies of 10 years of combat have made maintaining quality standards difficult, resulting in accelerated promotions and postponed or wait-listed professional military schooling. Existing systems are also not framed as "certifications" and thus are not recognized for their importance to the long-term stewardship of the profession. The idea of what constitutes a professional suffers from this confusion and perceived dichotomies between what should be and what actually exists.

Late in 2011, these APSIs and their recommendations for implementation were further refined and validated at an Army profession junior leader forum, a part of the Unified Quest exercise series. This gave junior Army professionals an opportunity to be heard and to validate the campaign findings, as well as to provide recommended solutions and initiatives for the campaign to further engage the force.

The many recommendations accompanying the seven APSIs are, as of January 2012, being staffed within the Army for implementation in 2012 and beyond. However, some implementation has already occurred. For example, the Soldiers' Creed has for years now clearly expressed to the Soldier that he or she is to be "an expert and a professional." The creed implies that elsewhere within Army doctrine and developmental activities the identity, character, and competencies of an Army professional will be taught and the individual can avail him or herself of that developmental opportunity. But, rather than doctrine and developmental programs for professionals as such, the Army now has a quite comprehensive set for Army leaders, but not for professionals per se.

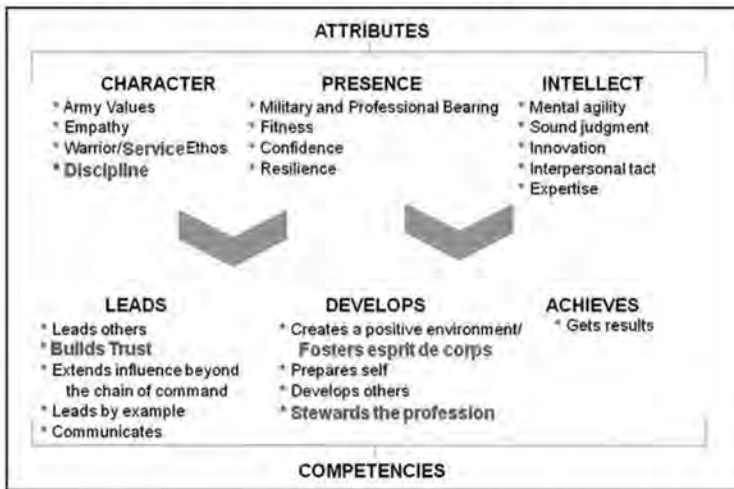
Thus, the challenge facing the CoP was whether multiple lists of individual attributes (one for Army leaders, one for Army professionals, etc.) are useful within Army doctrine for the development of the same individual. After a very brief discussion, it was agreed that there should not be multiple lists identifying personal attributes for the development of Army Soldiers and civilians; multiple lists simply induce confusion, particularly at lower levels, as to what personal attributes the individual should seek, with the Army's help, to develop. In other words, for an Army E-5 there should be one unambiguous set of personal

attributes, and both the Soldier and the Army should be mutually committed to their development.

Further, it was recognized that an Army Soldier or civilian cannot be a leader without also being a professional; and that by being a professional, if they are not a formal leader, then they are likely to still be an informal leader by the example they set and therefore the inspiration and influence they would have on other professionals. Current Army doctrine on leadership (*Army Doctrinal Publication [ADP] 6-22*, now in pre-publication final draft) is applicable to all Army leaders and professionals, uniformed and civilian, further reinforcing the rationale for a single list.

It was thus determined that since most of the original draft attributes in the White Paper are covered in current Army leadership doctrine, the addition of a critical few unique to professionals would suffice for a combined, single list. This modified Leader Requirements Model (LRM), as shown in Figure 4, is meant to be inspirational and aspirational to the individual, while at the same time stating the Army's expectations of its leaders and professionals. The single list is also to be inclusive of Army civilians, as is all of the doctrine in ADP 6-22.

The Army Leader Requirements Model – Pending Update to ADP 6-22



*Leaders are Professionals; all professionals practice formal/informal leadership*

**Figure 4. Leader Attributes and Competencies.**

However, it is understood that members of the profession, both military and civilian, are not necessarily required to meet these attributes and competencies comprehensively, maximally, and outright. Attainment is to be commensurate with position and responsibility. But all members must demonstrate a personal desire to meet progressively the requirements of these attributes and competencies. As discussed earlier, professional certification is sequential, and there will be multiple subsequent certifications during the leader-professional's career.

## CONCLUSION

As this descriptive monograph has shown, the Army is making good strides in its most recent effort to prepare for and transit a period of Defense reductions with professional capabilities intact and ready for the first battle of the next conflict. But, as discussed in the previous section, it must be understood that the really hard work is yet to be done.

The hard work is to conform the behavior of the institution each and every day to that of a profession when almost every tendency during the period of reductions will be to behave as a government bureaucracy; most likely centralizing authority, bureaucratizing processes, micro-managing while the force “does more with less,” and taking autonomy away from the very folks in whom the future of the institution lies — its junior professionals, both uniformed and civilian.

About this horrendous possibility, three observations are offered. First is the fact that the last time the Army behaved in a highly bureaucratic manner during a Defense reduction, just after the end of the Cold War, junior Army professionals “walked” (departed) in historic numbers to the immense, long-term detriment of the Army!<sup>30</sup>

Second, nothing in this analysis indicates that the campaign has yet seriously addressed the needed rearticulation of the Army Ethic and its moral narrative — the moral content of land combat power, why the Army fights and therefore how it fights, and why such a life is a worthy and desirable sacrifice of service to the Army’s Duty in the defense of the Republic — in ways that will provide the needed motivation and resilience for Army professionals during the transition period.

Finally, the responsibility to conform the Army behavior to that of a moral, military profession vice occupation or bureaucracy rests squarely with the senior leaders of the profession—the sergeants major, colonels, and general officers and their civilian equivalents. This is so simply because they, rather than mid-level uniformed officers and civilians, control the major management systems of the Army, particularly the human resource systems, which are so vital to the Army being a profession.<sup>31</sup>

Thus the Army is left where it always is, and should be, in such a critical situation—depending on its senior leaders to act in the best interest of the Nation and to maintain the Army uniquely as a military profession.

## ENDNOTES

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2. Gayle L. Watkins and Don M. Snider, "Project Conclusions," Chap. 25, in Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews, eds., *The Future of the Army Profession*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002, pp. 537-538.

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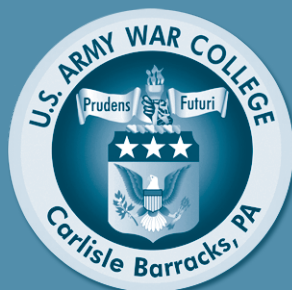
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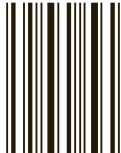
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